

NOW to the temple of Dyane the chaste
As shortly as I kan I wol me haste,
To telle yow al the descripcioun.
Depeynted been the walles up & doun
Of huntynge and of shamefast chas-
titee.

Ther saugh I how woful Calistopee,
Whan that Diane agreved was with here,
Was turned from a womman to a bere,
And after was she maad the loodesterre;
Thus was it peynt, I kan sey yow no ferre;
Hir sone is eek a sterre, as men may see.

Ther saugh I Dane, yturned til a tree,
I mene nat the goddesse Diane,
But Penneus doughter, which that highte Dane.
Ther saugh I Attheon an hert ymaked,
for vengeance that he saugh Diane al naked;
I saugh how that his houndes have hym caught,
And freeten hym, for that they knewe hym naught.

Yet peynted was a litel forthermoor
How Atthalante hunted the wilde boor,
And Meleagre, and many another mo,
for which Dyane wroghte hym care and wo.
Ther saugh I many another wonder storie,
The whiche me list nat drawen to memorie.

THIS goddesse on an hert ful hye seet,
With smale houndes al aboute hir feet,
And undermethe hir feet she hadde a
moone,

Wexynge it was, and sholde wanye soone.
In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,
With bowe in honde, and arwes in a cas.
Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.

A womman travaillynge was hire biforn,
But, for hir child so longe was unborn,
ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle,
And seyde, Help, for thou mayst best of alle.
Wel koude he peynten lifly, that it wroghte,
With many a floryn he the hewes boghte.

BEEN thise lystes maad, and
Theseus,
That at his grete cost arrayed thus
The temples & the theatre every deel,
Whan it was doon, hym lyked wonder
weel;

But stynte I wole of Theseus a lite,
And speke of Palamon and of Arcite.

The day approacheth of hir retournynge,
That everich sholde an hundred knyghtes brynge,
The bataille to darreynne, as I yow tolde,
And til Atthenes, hir covenants for to holde,
hath everich of hem brought an hundred knyghtes
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.
And sikerly ther trowed many a man
That nevere sithen that the world bigan,
As for to speke of knyghthod of hir hond,
As fer as God hath maked see or lond,
Nas, of so fewe, so noble a compaignye.
for every wight that lovede chivalrye,
And wolde, his thanks, han a passant name,
hath preyed that he myghte been of that game;
And wel was hym that therto chosen was;

for if ther fille tomorwe swich a caas,
Ye knowen wel, that every lusty knyght
That loveth paramours, and hath his myght,
Were it in Engeland, or elleswhere,
They wolde, hir thanks, wilnen to be there,
To fighte for a lady; benedicite!
It were a lusty sighte for to see.

AND right so ferdn they with Palamon.
With hym ther wenten knyghtes many oon,
Som wol ben armed in an haubergeoun,
And in brestplate and in a light gypoun;
And somme woln have a paire plates large;
And somme woln have a Puce sheeld or a targe;
Somme woln ben armed on hir legges weel,
And have an ax, and somme a mace of steel;
Ther is no newe gyse, that it nas old.
Armed were they, as I have yow told
Everych after his opinioun.

THER maistowseen comynge with Palamoun
Lygurge hymself, the grete kyng of Trace;
Blak was his berd, and manly was his face;

The cercles of his eyen in his heed,
They gloweden bitwyxe yelow and reed,
And lik a griffon looked he aboute,
With kempe heeris on his browes stoute;
His tymes grete, his brawnes harde and stronge,
His shuldres brode, his armes rounde and longe;
And, as the gyse was in his contree,
ful hye upon a chaar of gold stood he
With foure white boles in the trays.
Instede of cote armure over his harnays,
With nayles yelewe, and brighte as any gold,
He hadde a beres skyn, colblak, forold.
His longe heer was kembd bihynde his bak,
As any ravenes fethere it shoon forblak.
A wrethe of gold, armgreet, of huge wighte,
Upon his heed, set ful of stones brighte,
Of fyne rubyes and of dyamaunts;
Aboute his chaar ther wenten white alaunts,
Twenty and mo, as grete as any steer,
To huntun at the leoun or the deer;
And folwed hym with mosel faste ybounde,
Colored of gold and tourettes fyled rounde.
An hundred lordes hadde he in his route,
Armed ful wel, with hertes stierne and stoute.

ARCITE in stories as men fynde
The grete Emetreus, the kyng of Inde,
Upon a steede bay, trapped in steel,
Covered in clooth of gold, dyapred weel,
Cam ridynge lyk the god of armes, Mars.
His cote armure was of clooth of Tars
Couched with perles white and rounde and grete;
His sadel was of brend gold, newe ybete;
A mantelet upon his shulder hangynge,
Bretful of rubyes rede, as fyr sparklynge;
His criske heer, lyk rynges was yronne,
And that was yelow, and glytered as the sonne.
His nose was heigh, his eyen bright citryn,
His lippes rounde, his colour was sangwyn,
A fewe frakenes in his face yspreynd,
Betwixen yelow and somdel blak ymeynd,
And as a leoun he his lookyng caste.
Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste.

his berd was wel bigonne for to sprynge;
his voys was as a trompe thonderynge;
Upon his heed he wered, of laurer grene,
Agerland fressh and lusty for to sene,
Upon his hand he bar, for his deduyt,
An egle tyme, as any lilye whyt.
An egle tyme, as any lilye whyt.

AN hundred lordes hadde he with hym
there,
Al armed, save hir heddes, in al hir gere,
ful richely in alle maner thynges;
for trusteth wel, that dukes, crles, kynges,
were gadered in this noble compaignye,
for love, and for encrees of chivalrye.
Aboute this kyng ther ran on every part
ful many a tame leoun and lepart.

AND in this wise thise lordes, all and some,
Been on the Sonday to the citee come
Aboute pryme, and in the toun alight.
THIS Theseus, this duc, this worthy knyght,
Whan he had broght hem into his citee
And inned hem, everich in his degree,
he festeth hem, and dooth so greet labour
To esen hem, and doon hem al honour,
That yet men weneth that no mannes wit
Of noon estaat ne koude amenden it.

The mynstralcy, the service at the feeste,
The grete yiftes to the meeste and leeste,
The riche array of Theseus paleys,
Ne who sat first ne last upon the deys,
What ladyes fairest been, or best daunsynge,
Or which of hem kan dauncen best and synge,
Ne who moost felyngly speketh of love;
What haukes sitten on the perche above,
What houndes ligen in the floor adoun;
Of al this make I now no mencion;
But al theeffect; that thyneketh me the beste;
Now cometh the point, and herkneth if yow leste.

THE Sonday nyght, er day bigan to sprynge,
Whan Palamon the larke herde synge,
Al though it nere nat day by houres two,
Yet song the lark, and Palamon also.
With hooly herte and with an heigh corage,
he roos, to wenden on his pilgrymage
Unto the blisful Citherea benigne,
I mene Venus, honorable and digne;
And in hir houre he walketh forth a paas
Unto the lystes, ther hire temple was,
And doun he kneleth with ful humble chere
And herte soor, and seyde in this manere:

MAIRESTE of faire, o lady
myn, Venus,
Doughter to Jove, and
spouse of Vulcanus,
Thow gladdere of the mount
of Citheron,
for thilke love thow had-
dest to Adoon,
Have pitee of my bittre
teeris smerte,
And taak myn humble preyere at thyn herte.
Alas! I ne have no langage to telle
Theeffectes ne the tormentes of myn helle;
Myn herte may myne harmes nat biwreie;

I am so confus, that I kan noght seye.
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest weele
My thought, and seest what harmes that I feele,
Considere al this, and rewe upon my soore,
As wisty as I shal for everemoore,
Emforth my myght, thy trewe servant be,
And holden werre alwey with chastitee,
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe,
I kepe noght of armes for to yelpe,
Ne I ne axe nat tomorwe to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this cas, ne veyne glorie
Of pris of armes blowen up and doun,
But I wolde have fully possession
Of Emelye, and dye in thy servyse;
fynd thow the manere how, and in what wyse.
I recche nat but it may bettre be
To have victorie of hem, or they of me,
So that I have my lady in myne armes;
for though so be that Mars is god of armes,
Youre vertu is so greet in hevne above,
That if yow list, I shal wel have my love.
Thy temple wol I worshipe everemo,
And on thyn auter, wher I ride or go,
I wol doon sacrifice and fires beete;
And if ye wol nat so, my lady sweete,
Thanne preye I thee, tomorwe with a spere
That Arcite me thurgh the herte bere;
Thanne rekke I noght whan I have lost my tyf
Though that Arcite wyne hire to his wyf;
This is theeffect and ende of my preyere,
Yif me my love, thow blisful lady deere.

WHAN thurison was doon of Palamon,
his sacrifice he dide, and that anon
ful pitously, with alle circumstaunce,
Al telle I noght as now his observaunce;
But atte laste the statue of Venus shook
And made a signe, wherby that he took
That his preyere accepted was that day;
for thogh the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wiste he wel that graunted was his boone,
And with glad herte he wente hym hoom ful
soone.

THE thriddre houre inequal that Palamon
Bigan to Venus temple for to gon,
Up roos the sonne, and up roos Emelye,
And to the temple of Dyane gan hye.
Hir maydens that she thider with hire ladde
ful redily with hem the fyr they hadde,
Thencens, the clothes, and the remenant al
That to the sacrifice longen shal;
The hornes fulle of meeth, as was the gyse;
Ther lakked noght to doon hir sacrificse.
Smokyng the temple, ful of clothes faire,
This Emelye, with herte debonaire,
hir body wessh with water of a well;
But how she dide her ryte, I dar nat telle,
But it be any thing in general,
And yet it were a game to heeren al;
To hym that meneth wel it were no charge,
But it is good a man been at his large.

IR brighte heer was kempd, untressed al,
A coroune of a grene ook cerial
Upon hir heed was set ful fair and meete.